

**Proposed Action for
Managing Motorized Travel on the
Tonto National Forest**

October 2009

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Background

On November 9, 2005, the Forest Service published final travel management regulations governing off-highway vehicles (OHVs) and other terrestrial motorized vehicles on National Forest System (NFS) lands. The new regulations amended *part 212, subpart B of part 251, subpart A of part 261*, and removed *part 295 of Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR). These three regulations are referred to collectively as the Travel Management Rule.

The Travel Management Rule was developed in response to the substantial increase in use of OHVs on NFS lands and subsequent impacts to forest resources caused by unmanaged OHV use over the past 30 years. The regulations implement *Executive Order (E.O.) 11644, Use of Off-road Vehicles on the Public Lands* (1977), and *E.O. 11989*, which amended *E.O. 11644* (1977). The objective is to provide: *for a system of NFS roads, NFS trails, and areas on NFS lands that are designated for motor vehicle use. Motor vehicle use off designated roads and trails and outside of designated areas is prohibited (36 CFR 212.50)*. This designation will include class of vehicle and, if appropriate, time of year for motor vehicle use.

The following definitions come from the Travel Management Rule, section 212.1.

- A *road* is a motor vehicle route over 50 inches wide, unless identified and managed as a trail.
- A *trail* is defined as a route 50 inches or less in width, or a route over 50 inches in width that is identified and managed as a trail. (A *road* is managed for use by vehicles over 50 inches wide while a motorized *trail* is managed for use by vehicles 50 inches wide or less.)
- A *forest road or trail* means a road or trail wholly or partly within, or adjacent to, and serving the National Forest System that the Forest Service determines is necessary for the protection, administration, and utilization of National Forest System land and use and development of its resources.
- An *unauthorized road or trail* is either not a forest road or trail, or is a temporary road or trail that was meant to be closed after its intended use and that is not included in a forest road inventory. The term “route” is used in this document to encompass all roads and motorized trails.
- An *area* is a discrete, specifically delineated space that is smaller, and in most cases much smaller, than a ranger district. [That would be a small portion of a ranger district.] Motorized vehicles can travel on roads, trails, or cross-country within a designated *area*.

Designated routes and areas will be identified on a motor vehicle use map. Once routes have been designated and identified on a motor vehicle use map, motor vehicle use will be prohibited off the designated system. The following vehicles and uses are exempted from these designations: 1) aircraft, 2) watercraft, 3) oversnow vehicles, 4) limited administrative use by the Forest Service, 5) use of any fire, military, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle for emergency purposes, 6) authorized use of any combat or combat support vehicle for national defense purposes, 7) law enforcement response or emergency needs, and 8) motor vehicle use that is specifically authorized under a written authorization issued under Federal law or regulation (*36 CFR 212.51 (a)*). In designating routes, the responsible official may include in the designation the limited use of motor vehicles within a specific distance of certain designated routes, and if appropriate within a specified time period, solely for the purposes of dispersed camping or retrieval of a downed big game animal by an individual who has legally taken that animal (*36 CFR 212.51(b)*).

The rule further states that “the responsible official may incorporate previous administrative decisions regarding travel management made under other authorities, including designations and prohibitions of motor vehicle use, in designating NFS roads, trails, and areas” (*36 CFR 212.50(b)*). Nothing in the final rule requires reconsideration of any previous administrative decisions that allow, restrict, or prohibit vehicle use on NFS roads, trails or in areas and that were made under other authorities. Alternatively, responsible officials may choose to reconsider past decisions, with public involvement, as necessary to achieve the purposes of the final rule (*Federal Register*, vol. 70, no. 216, p. 68269). This means that all roads, trails, and areas that have been identified in the past for motorized use do not have to be reconsidered. Therefore this analysis concerns only proposed changes to the current system.

National forests and districts across the nation have been working to designate a system where motorized travel is allowed. There are several steps to this process, including reviewing existing direction, assembling resource data, performing an environmental analysis and making a decision, publishing motor vehicle use maps, and finally monitoring the system and its uses to determine needs for further changes.

Motorized Travel on the Tonto National Forest

The Tonto National Forest (TNF) covers nearly three million acres (2,872,769) in central Arizona and is the fifth largest national forest in the National Forest System. The TNF spans a range of ecosystems from the Sonoran desert through a variety of chaparral and pinyon pine/juniper woodlands up to the mixed conifer and ponderosa pine types of the Mogollon Rim. Many of the roads on the TNF have been in place for decades. Over the years the TNF has implemented various processes to identify and make changes to the road system, either for specific projects or just to make it more effective, cost efficient, and to reduce resource impacts. The existing road system is a result of a public involvement process of the late 1980's called Resource Access Travel Management (RATM). The current process being undertaken is focused on identifying and designating a comprehensive system of routes for motorized travel, and restricting motorized travel to those routes.

The TNF abuts the northern edge of the Phoenix metropolitan area, which has a population of more than three million people. The city of Phoenix has a population of over 1.5 million (2006 US Census estimate), making it the fifth largest city in the United States. With its warm and sunny year-round climate and wide variety of business, cultural, and recreational offerings, along with the many direct flights from most major US cities, the Phoenix area is a popular destination for conferences, conventions, and tourism. These factors combine to make the TNF one of the most heavily visited national forests in the nation, with nearly 6 million recreational visitors annually (English et al., 2004). Many of these visitors drive through the TNF sightseeing or on their way to other destinations such as the Grand Canyon or other northern, high-elevation locations to escape the summer heat found in the valley. Some visit the many congressionally designated Wilderness Areas that make up 25 percent of the TNF land base. Others come for the variety of water-based recreation such as fishing, boating, water skiing, swimming, and rafting, or to picnic near the several picturesque desert lakes and rivers. Many come to ride and explore the TNF by a variety of recreational vehicles including OHVs. The TNF is one of the most heavily used national forests in the country for motorized recreation, with nearly a million visitors using OHVs on the forest annually (English et al., 2004).

During the past 10 years, OHV use has increased dramatically across the nation, especially in the western U.S. where there are millions of acres of public land. In Arizona, OHV use has increased by 347 percent since 1998 (Arizona State Game and Fish Department FAQ Sheet, 2008), outpacing the financial resources to manage that growth in use, protect natural resources, and maintain safe and reasonable recreational access. Some of this OHV use has occurred off authorized routes; in sensitive riparian areas, around and over heritage sites, in threatened or endangered species habitat, in designated wilderness areas, through streams and up streambanks, and across highly erodible slopes. Managing motorized recreation is particularly challenging on the TNF with its fragile desert ecosystems and high demand for motorized access.

The TNF comprises six ranger districts: Cave Creek, Globe, Mesa, Payson, Pleasant Valley, and Tonto Basin (Figure 1). Each of these districts receives a great deal of motorized recreational use, though it varies in intensity and type as well as by season. The particular issues and concerns regarding motorized recreation also vary by district. Due to these variations, Travel Management route evaluations, public involvement processes, and identification of potential routes and areas for motorized travel were performed by each district before being combined into a single forest-wide proposal.

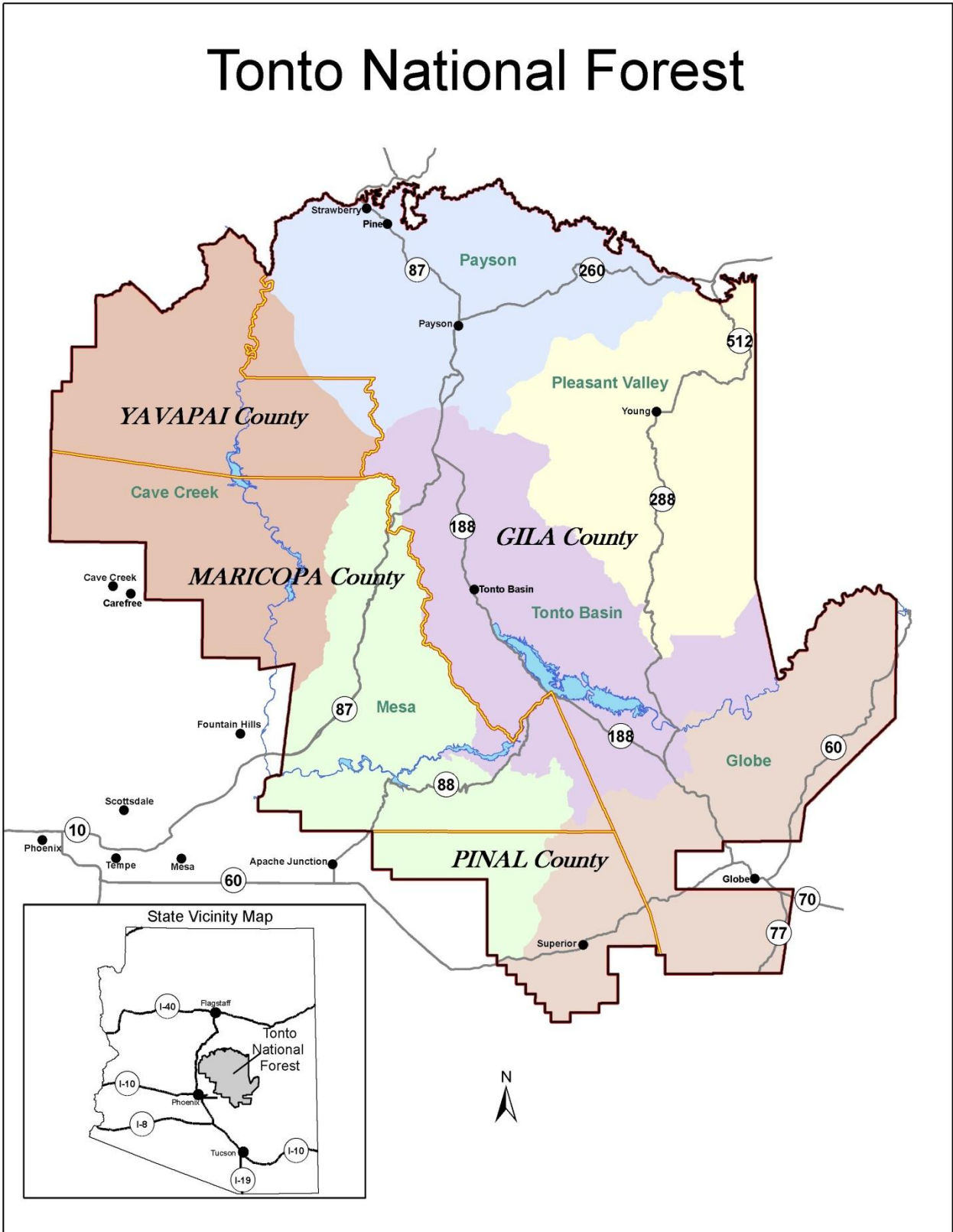


Figure 1 – Tonto National Forest, counties and its six ranger districts (shaded areas)

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to identify changes to the existing motorized transportation system necessary to comply with the requirements of the Travel Management Rule. This purpose could be met by restricting cross-country travel on the Payson and Pleasant Valley Ranger Districts and producing a Motorized Visitor Use Map (MVUM) of the existing transportation system. However, through the Travel Analysis Process (TAP) where TNF specialists evaluated the current system, natural resource information, user preferences, and changing conditions and trends, some changes to that system were identified.

After comparing the existing road system and motorized uses on the TNF with the requirements of the Travel Management Rule and the desired conditions in the TNF management plan, the following needs for change were identified:

- Determine which, if any, unauthorized routes should be added to the system to improve access, to increase the diversity of motorized recreational opportunities, and/or to connect certain system routes to create loops.
- Determine which, if any, authorized NFS roads that are currently open should be closed to public motorized travel to protect natural or cultural resources, to minimize maintenance costs, and/or to improve public safety.
- Identify any restrictions on allowed uses, classes of vehicles, or seasons of use for specific routes.
- Determine whether, when, in what locations, and how far motor vehicles may be driven off certain designated roads for the purpose of dispersed camping and big game retrieval.
- Amend the TNF management plan to prohibit cross country travel on two ranger districts and to revise wording for consistency regarding definitions and how people are informed about which routes are open to motorized travel.

Public Involvement

Each District on the Forest developed a public involvement strategy consistent with the conditions and the opportunities on that district. Some districts held open public meetings and some attended meetings sponsored by other agencies or organizations to explain the process and gather information. District Rangers and staff met with individuals and representatives of various organizations to explain the designation process, identify user preferences, gather information on current conditions, and share information. Forest Service employees also met with American Indian Tribes, elected officials, other agencies, organizations, and members of the public to share information and initiate dialog about the route and area designation process.

The information gained from these formal and informal meetings and discussions played a key role in developing and shaping proposals on each district. Resource specialists from the TNF performed a Travel Analysis Process (TAP) to evaluate current motorized travel system and conditions and determine needs for change. The TAP involved identifying the amount and types of uses occurring on the district; evaluating the current route system adequacy to accommodate volume and types of uses; and reviewing each route for risks to resources and public safety and benefits to access and motorized recreation.

Each district identified an appropriate system of motorized routes that were combined to become the TNF proposed action. With this proposed action, the TNF will begin scoping and will hold additional meetings with tribes, organizations, agencies, and the public on each district to explain the process used to develop this proposal and gather public input for additional changes to the current motorized travel system. Public input during this time will also be used to identify issues and develop any alternatives to the proposed system.

Existing and Desired Conditions for Roads, Trails, and Areas

Existing Conditions

The TNF provides a variety of goods and services to the Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas as well as the communities surrounded by the Forest. Visitors from across the nation and foreign countries enjoy the many recreation opportunities the Forest has to offer. The Forest provides wildlife habitat, open space, forage for livestock, forest products such as timber and firewood, water and air cycling and other ecosystem services, and many forms of recreation including motorized recreation. Unregulated motorized use and increases in the size, power, and versatility of off road vehicles have led to a proliferation of unauthorized routes and areas of use and unauthorized use of administratively closed roads. Some unauthorized routes have been created on NFS land by adjacent private land owners. These routes often provide access to the Forest directly from residences. Many of these unauthorized routes are causing damage to soils, water quality, wildlife and habitat, and heritage resources, as well as resulting in user conflicts and complaints about dust and noise.

Unauthorized routes are not built to Forest Service standards nor maintained appropriately. They often develop when a vehicle travels cross-country, leaving tracks. Subsequently other vehicles may travel over the same route repeatedly until an unauthorized route develops. The Forest does not have a complete inventory of all unauthorized routes because there are so many and it changes too frequently to remain valid; however, some of these unauthorized routes were evaluated through the TAPs.

Roads

Existing roads on the TNF provide access for a variety of uses including various recreational activities such as sightseeing, camping, access to recreational sites and facilities, and game retrieval, and the enjoyment of riding and exploring the forest. Collecting forest products such as firewood and pinyon nuts typically involves the use of existing roads. Administrative and commercial activities such as livestock grazing, maintaining utilities, timber harvest, special uses, outfitter and guide services, and other uses are also highly dependent on existing roads for access.

NFS roads are categorized by five *Maintenance Levels* (ML). Maintenance Levels define the standard to which they are maintained and also may determine whether they are open to non-street-legal vehicles. In Arizona, Maintenance Level 3, 4, and 5 roads are managed for use by passenger vehicles and are generally open only to highway legal and licensed vehicles operated by licensed drivers. Maintenance Level 2 roads are managed for high-clearance vehicles and are generally open to all vehicles whether highway legal or not, though are often not passable by low clearance vehicles. Maintenance Level 1 roads are closed to all motorized vehicles but remain on the transportation system and may be reopened should the need arise in the future.

There are approximately 4,290 miles of NFS roads on the TNF, of which approximately 3,670 are currently open to the public for motorized travel. These NFS roads are divided into the five Maintenance Levels as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Current NFS Objective Road Maintenance Levels

Level	Definition	Miles (approx.)
ML 1	Assigned to intermittent service roads during the time they are closed to vehicular traffic. The closure period must exceed 1 year. Basic custodial maintenance is performed to keep damage to adjacent resources to an acceptable level and to perpetuate the road to facilitate future management activities. Emphasis is normally given to maintaining drainage facilities and runoff patterns. Planned road deterioration may occur at this level. Appropriate traffic management strategies are “prohibit” and “eliminate.” Roads receiving level 1 maintenance may be of any type, class, or construction standard, and may be managed at any other Maintenance Level during the time they are open for traffic. However, while being maintained at level 1, they are closed to vehicular traffic, but may be open and suitable for non-motorized uses.	620
ML 2	Assigned to roads open for use by high-clearance vehicles. Passenger car traffic is not a consideration. Traffic is normally minor, usually consisting of one or a combination of administrative, permitted, dispersed recreation, or other specialized uses. Log haul may occur at this level. Appropriate traffic management strategies are either to (1) discourage or prohibit passenger cars or (2) accept or discourage	3,220

	high-clearance vehicles.	
ML 3	Assigned to roads open and maintained for travel by prudent drivers in standard passenger cars. User comfort and convenience are low priorities. Roads in this Maintenance Level are typically low speed, single lane with turnouts, and spot surfacing. Some roads may be fully surfaced with either native or processed material. Appropriate traffic management strategies are either “encourage” or “accept.” “Discourage” or “prohibit” strategies may be employed for certain classes of vehicles or users.	310
ML 4	Assigned to roads that provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate travel speeds. Most roads are double lane and aggregate surfaced, however, some roads may be single lane. Some roads may be paved and/or dust abated. The most appropriate traffic management strategy is “encourage.” However, the “prohibit” strategy may apply to specific classes of vehicles or users at certain times.	90
ML 5	Assigned to roads that provide a high degree of user comfort and convenience. These roads are normally double-lane, paved facilities. Some may be aggregate surfaced and dust abated. The appropriate traffic management strategy is “encourage.”	50

This list represents the *objective* Maintenance Level for these roads. There is also the *operational* Maintenance Level, which is the level at which the road is actually being managed. These two types of Maintenance Levels are sometimes not the same. For example, the maintenance level may have been entered into the database incorrectly. In at least one case, a road that was constructed to access a facility was never entered into the database at all. For these reasons there are discrepancies in the database for road Maintenance Levels that will be corrected through this process. This is important as the Forest Service considers the environmental impacts.

In other instances, several of the Maintenance Level 1 roads currently listed as closed to motorized travel were never physically closed and have continued to be used for a variety of purposes. For example, the two northern districts (Payson and Pleasant Valley) have been open to cross-country motorized travel. Closure of Maintenance Level 1 roads merely indicated that they would not be maintained for motorized travel but this did not actually restrict motorized travel. Also, due to the northern districts having been open to cross-country travel, there was no need to identify specific roads as open for motorized travel, only to identify areas or roads where motorized travel might be restricted. Thus there are more miles of objective Maintenance Level 1 roads than there are of operational Maintenance Level 1 roads.

Trails

Trail classifications define how and for what uses the trail is managed, including signage, width, and surface condition. Some trails are managed for non-motorized uses and some for motorized uses. Trails may also be managed for single-track motorized use

(motorcycle) or two-track motorized use (OHV). There are currently two motorized OHV trails on the TNF, totaling approximately 2 miles. Both are on the Cave Creek District.

Areas

There are no OHV areas currently designated as such on the TNF, though there are several locations where there is highly concentrated use by motorized vehicles, primarily OHVs. These areas of concentrated use are mainly in the districts adjacent to heavily populated areas and are places where the public has found the motorized recreation most accessible and enjoyable. Some of these areas of concentrated use have experienced severe degradation. A variety of approaches for managing motor vehicle use in these locations have been implemented, including limiting or restricting access, such as gates with access by permit only. These and other management approaches may be implemented for future motorized area designations.

Cross-Country Travel

The TNF's current Forest Plan allows cross-country travel on its two northern districts unless a location is restricted or posted closed. Cross-country travel is prohibited in the four southern districts unless posted open. However, a significant amount of cross-country travel occurs throughout the TNF, which has led to route proliferation, user conflicts, and resource damage.

There are many reasons that people operate motor vehicles cross-country or off system routes. In some cases, users are unaware of which routes are authorized for motorized travel and which are not. Sometimes signs have been destroyed or removed. In other situations, there is a disparity in motorized use policies between land management agencies, between national forests, and between districts within national forests and it is often confusing to the public to know where cross-country travel is allowed and where it is not. Sometimes people who have residences that border the TNF create spur routes to access the Forest directly from their property. Finally, some motorized users are either unaware or unconcerned about the safety issues, conflicts, and resource damage that often result from traveling off authorized routes.

Desired Conditions

Desired conditions identified in the Tonto National Forest Land Management Plan are to provide a serviceable road and trail transportation system to meet public access, land management, and resource protections needs (p. 21). The Forest Service continues to recognize valid existing rights of access to private property as stated in *36 CFR 212.55(d)*. Permits will address access needs for certain permitted activities not adequately served by the designated system. Desired conditions also comply with the Travel Management Rule by restricting cross-country travel on the Forest except in designated OHV Areas.

Any changes to the motorized travel system avoid significant negative impacts to:

- Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species;
- Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds;
- Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas;
- Inventoried roadless areas, potential wilderness areas, or wild and scenic river corridors;
- Research natural areas;
- American Indian religious or cultural sites; and
- Archaeological sites or historic properties or areas.

Motor Vehicle Use to Access Dispersed Campsites

A “dispersed campsite” is a place people camp that is not in a developed campground. Dispersed campsites are generally primitive and do not have tables, restrooms, and grills, though they may have rock fire rings built by a previous camper. Usually dispersed camping is free of cost. “Motorized dispersed camping,” also known as car camping, is when people drive their cars, trucks, RVs, or OHVs off a road to camp either in their vehicles or with their vehicles close by.

Under the Travel Management Rule, motor vehicle use off designated roads, trails, and areas will be prohibited by section 212.50. The Travel Management Rule provides for motorized access to dispersed camping as follows:

- *In designating routes, the responsible official may include in the designation the limited use of motor vehicles within a specified distance of certain designated routes, and if appropriate within specified time periods, solely for the purposes of dispersed camping. (36 CFR 212.51(b)).*

Opportunities for dispersed camping exist across the TNF. Sometimes people park at trailheads or roadside locations and hike to their camping spots. Others will drive cross-country to their camping spot, often with a recreational vehicle or camping trailer. On the northern two districts, driving off-road has been legal. On the four southern districts, campers have been cited for driving off the road. Frequently used dispersed campsites, where evidence of past use exists, are located along both NFS and unauthorized roads throughout the forest. Some frequently used dispersed campsites located some distance from a road have a short spur road leading to them.

In summer, dispersed camping is popular in the cooler, higher elevations. During hunting season, dispersed camping is prevalent in hunting units and near streams and lakes. Some

popular camping locations may have once had archaeological or historic sites or artifacts, but in most cases these have long since been altered or removed. Some sites may be located where they contribute erosion or pollution to nearby waterways or are situated in otherwise sensitive locations. The TNF anticipates that, with the popularity of OHVs and recreational vehicles, along with the Southwest's growing population, the demand for dispersed camping will continue to increase. According to Arizona's 2008 *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, 33 percent of survey respondents said that they tent camp at least once a year, and of those, 32 percent indicated that they expect to do more tent camping in coming years; 24 percent of respondents said that they RV camp at least once a year, and 26 percent of RV campers said that they expect to do more camping (Arizona State Parks, 2008).

The TNF will evaluate motorized access for dispersed camping. Any dispersed camping sites or corridors to be designated will first be evaluated for safety and environmental concerns, cleared for historical or cultural resources, and then identified on the MVUM.

Motorized Vehicle Use for Big Game Retrieval

The Travel Management Rule addresses using motor vehicles to retrieve game in this manner:

- *In designating routes, the responsible official may include in the designation the limited use of motor vehicles within a specified distance of certain designated routes, and if appropriate within specified time periods, solely for the purposes of ... retrieval of a downed big game animal by an individual who has legally taken that animal (36 CFR 212.51(b)).*

For the purposes of motorized off-road game retrieval, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) defines big game to include bear, bison, elk, and mule deer. The TNF contains game units 21, 22, 23, 24A, and 24B as delineated by the AZGFD. Based on recent harvest data¹, there were 1,107 big game animals taken during the 2007-2008 hunting season (84 black bear, 594 mule deer, and 429 elk—there are no bison hunts on the TNF). This represents the maximum number of big game animals that could have been retrieved using a motorized vehicle traveling off-road during that season. It is more likely, however, that the actual number of big game animals retrieved by motorized vehicle was fewer because some are retrieved via non-motorized methods. The number of hunting licenses issued and number of animals harvested also varies year to year due to a number of factors such as animal populations, weather, and game management objectives.

While some hunters retrieve big game using motorized vehicles, others have indicated that the use of motor vehicles during hunting season has resulted in an unsuccessful hunt for them because noise may scare game away from their tree stand or hunting spot (AZGFD,

¹ The data used for this summary includes the final results of the 2007 black bear check-ins, the 2008 general elk questionnaire, the 2008 general deer and draw archery questionnaires, and the 2008 archery deer check-in.

2007). Hunting is not allowed from roads, nor is it allowed from a motorized vehicle traveling off road.

The TNF will evaluate the need for and impacts of motorized access for big game retrieval.

Previous Decisions

The Travel Management Rule directs that “the responsible official may incorporate previous administrative decisions regarding travel management made under other authorities, including designations and prohibitions of motor vehicle use, in designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands for motor vehicle use.” (36 *CFR* 212.50*b*) The current system of authorized roads and trails on the TNF are previous decisions and will not be analyzed as part of this environmental assessment and decision unless they are proposed for change. Prior decisions also include closure orders, which are temporary restrictions for certain routes or locations. (There are currently several forest orders on the TNF to temporarily close areas to motorized travel for various resource and safety reasons.)

Proposed Action

The Forest analyzed approximately 3,670 miles of National Forest System roads that are currently open to the public for motorized travel, as well as approximately 620 miles of roads that are identified for closure (Maintenance Level 1). The TNF also analyzed approximately 265 miles of unauthorized routes. Although there are more miles of unauthorized routes, the agency does not have the resources to identify, map, and evaluate them. Additionally, the Travel Management Rule does not require analysis of unauthorized routes.

Through route analysis, specialists looked at both broad scale sub-sections of the forest to identify general uses, conditions, and objectives, and at individual routes to determine how each route relates to the entire route system, any beneficial values, and environmental and public safety risks. Based on the TAP and its risk and benefit analysis, the TNF identified approximately 260 miles of system roads to be closed. These are roads that were determined to pose a significant risk to natural, cultural, or historic resources; to be redundant with another route; to have public safety concerns; to provide little or no benefit for visitors or administrative use; or to have some combination of these risk factors. The Forest identified approximately 460 miles of system roads that are currently designated for closure to be re-designated open as either roads or motorized trails; and the Forest identified approximately 285 miles of unauthorized routes to be added to the system as either roads or motorized trails. These were routes determined to provide benefits by offering added value to the travel system while not having significant risks to resources or safety.

The TNF proposes the following changes to the current motorized travel system:

- Add approximately 140 miles of unauthorized routes to the transportation system that will be open to all classes of vehicles (see Tables 2 and 3 for more details).
- Add approximately 145 miles of unauthorized routes to the motorized trail system that will be open to vehicles under 50 inches in width (see Table 2 for more details).
- Add approximately 75 miles of unauthorized routes to the non-motorized trail system (see Table 2 for more details).
- Designate approximately 460 miles of roads currently identified for closure as open to motorized vehicles. These roads will be changed from Maintenance Level 1 to Maintenance Level 2 through 5 or to motorized trail (see Table 2 for more details).
- Designate five motorized OHV areas:

Mesa Ranger District	Sycamore OHV Area	approximately 2,390 acres
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Mesa Ranger District	Sycamore tot lot	approximately 3 acres
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Mesa Ranger District	The Rolls tot lot	approximately 6 acres
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Globe Ranger District	Golf Course OHV Area	approximately 20 acres
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Globe Ranger District	Pipeline OHV Area	approximately 380 acres
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- Close approximately 260 miles of NFS roads currently open to motorized travel because of resource damage, redundancy, safety hazards, or because they are not necessary for the use and administration of NFS lands (see Table 2 for more details).
- Designate spur routes to existing dispersed campsites where practical. Where multiple dispersed camping sites exist within a small area, corridors up to 300 feet off a system road may be designated to provide access to these sites.
- Provide for motorized big game retrieval for elk harvesting in designated game management units off the designated road system.
- Prohibit motorized travel off the designated road system except for the dispersed camping corridors or as provided for big game retrieval.
- Amend the Forest Plan to reflect the requirements of the Travel Management Rule and incorporate the proposed changes to the current system, as follows:
 - Prohibit motorized travel off the designated road system on all districts.

- Delete the list of miles of roads by Maintenance Level (page 10).
- Remove references to numbers of acres open and number of acres closed to vehicle travel (page 13).
- Change the reference to off-road vehicle (ORV) maps and replace with reference to Motorized Visitor Use Maps (MVUM) (page 38).
- Remove all references to routes being open unless posted closed or closed unless posted open and state instead that all routes open to motorized travel will be shown as such on the MVUM, unless under a forest closure order (pages 60, 62, 67, 82, 86, 105, 129, 140, 153, 165, 180, 194).

Table 2. Proposed Action Changes to Road Maintenance Levels (approximate mileage by Ranger District)

Proposed Changes	Ranger Districts						
	Cave Creek	Mesa	Tonto Basin	Globe	Pleasant Valley	Payson	Totals
CLOSED TO PUBLIC USE (Level 1) – CHANGE TO:							
Open to all vehicles (Level 2)	40	25	80	20	90	170	425
Open to street legal vehicles (Level 3)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Motorized Trail (Open to vehicles under 50’')	1	10	0	0	20	5	36
Non-motorized Trail	5	5	0	0	5	0	15
Decommissioned	35	65	5	1	145	10	261
OPEN TO ALL VEHICLES (Level 2) – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	40	55	25	25	20	1	166
Open to street legal vehicles (Level 3)	10	10	10	0	1	0	31
Open to street legal vehicles (Level 4)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Motorized Trail (Open to vehicles under 50’')	5	1	0	0	10	1	17
Non-motorized Trail	10	0	0	0	0	0	10
Decommissioned	25	10	30	1	20	1	87
OPEN TO STREET LEGAL VEHICLES (Level 3) – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	5	5	1	1	1	5	18
Open to all vehicles (Level 2)	15	1	10	20	25	10	81
Decommissioned	0	0	1	0	1	1	3

Proposed Changes	Ranger Districts						
	Cave Creek	Mesa	Tonto Basin	Globe	Pleasant Valley	Payson	Totals
OPEN TO STREET LEGAL VEHICLES (Level 4) – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
Open to street legal vehicles (Level 3)	5	0	1	0	0	0	6
Open to street legal vehicles (Level 5)	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
OPEN TO STREET LEGAL VEHICLES (Level 5) – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Decommissioned	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
CLOSED TO MOTORIZED USE (Non-motorized Trail) – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
Open to vehicles under 50” (Motorized Trail)	1	0	0	0	1	15	17
CLOSED TO PUBLIC USE (Decommission) – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	10	1	5	1	10	30	57
Open to all vehicles (Level 2)	1	1	0	0	5	15	22
Motorized Trail (Open to vehicles under 50”)	1	0	0	0	20	1	22
UNCLASSIFIED OR USER CREATED – CHANGE TO:							
Closed to public use (Level 1)	1	5	0	0	10	0	16
Open to all vehicles (Level 2)	35	35	10	1	55	5	141
Open to street legal vehicles (Level 3)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Motorized Trail (Open to vehicles under 50”)	35	60	5	0	35	10	145
Non-motorized Trail	70	5	0	0	1	0	76

Table 3. Summary of Proposed Forest-wide Mileage Changes (approximate)

Previous Decision	Proposed Action	Miles (with unclassified roads)	Miles (without unclassified roads)
Closed to motorized vehicles	Open to motorized vehicles	665	525
Open to motorized vehicles	Closed to motorized vehicles	290	200
<i>Multiple designations</i>	Motorized trails	240	90
<i>Multiple designations</i>	Non-motorized trails	100	25

Decisions to be Made

The Forest Supervisor will make the following decisions after the analysis is complete:

- What roads or segments of roads, trails, and areas to include in the final designated motorized travel system;
- What classes of motorized vehicles will be allowed on roads or segments of roads and trails;
- What special season or time of day restrictions, if any, will be applied to specific routes or areas;
- Whether and how far motorized travel off designated routes for dispersed camping will be included in the motorized travel system designations;
- Whether and how far motorized travel off designated routes for big game retrieval will be included in the motorized travel system designations;
- What mitigation and/or monitoring measures would be implemented as part of the selected alternative, and;
- Whether to amend the Forest Plan to change language as described above.

Contact Person

For more information on this proposal, contact Genevieve Johnson, project team leader at (602) 225-5213, by email at grjohnson@fs.fed.us, or you may contact your local District office. Additional information about this project, including maps, can be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/travelmgt/index.shtml>.

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